Russell and Linda Bowdre
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907/895-4328
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Dear Commissioners:

It seems that we in the Delta area are continually being pressured to form an organized borough. In order to support the borough there would have to be a tax base. We don't think there is a substantial tax base in our area. Alot of the Delta area's population consists of farmers, Russian immigrants and retirees. The statewide unemployment rate is 7.6% compared to Delta's at 14.1%, almost double, according to Alaska labor statistics. Fairbanks and Anchorage unemployment rates are at 6.6% and 5.1% respectively. The tax base in our area consists of: 1 small sporting goods store, 2 small building supply stores, 1 small grocery store, 3 gas stations, 3 small eating establishments, 3 bars and a small agricultural community. Quite the substantial tax base!?

While some locals are benefiting from employment by the Missile Defense project and Pogo Mine, the majority of jobs are filled by people from outside the community. These jobs are basically temporary and those hired from outside probably won't stay in the area when the work is completed.

Some have said that we in the Delta area need to pay our "fair share" of the education bill. This is not a legitimate argument for two reasons.

Firstly, according to our state constitution, it is the state's responsibility to provide schools. This ensures an education to those communities that cannot support a tax base. As you well know, much of Alaska would be without schools if paying our "fair share" was enforced statewide.

Secondly, the Delta area does generate money for the state from the taxes charged against some 38 miles of the pipeline.   Should we incorporate into an organized borough, some of those funds would be diverted to the maintenance of the borough instead of going into the state's coffers for dispersion where needed.

Thank you for your time in reading this and considering our thoughts on the matter.

Sincerely,

Russ and Linda Bowdre

Russ Bowdre
Linda Bowdre